

# CITY OF WILMINGTON

## NORTH CAROLINA

CITY OF WILMINGTON PUBLIC INFORMATION REPORT

Summer 2013

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### What your \$ pays for:

Each year, the city's employees provide a variety of services to help maintain the community and keep it safe. The following statistics provide a few examples of what citizens received for their money in the 2012-13 budget:

- WPD calls for service ..... 175,000
- WFD response calls..... 10,500
- Miles of streets maintained..... 400
- Miles of sidewalks maintained 400
- Acres of city maintained parks, greenways, athletic facilities..... 778
- Potholes repaired ..... 4,663
- Trash picked up .... 46.5 million lbs.
- Street lights maintained ..... 9,257
- Traffic signals maintained ..... 212
- Signs made & maintained .. 17,000



## City budget maintains core services, tax rate stays same



*City workers make repairs on Bagley Avenue.*

In June, the City Council approved the budget for 2013-14 that maintains core services and a dedicated maintenance fund for street and sidewalk repairs, but does NOT include a property tax increase.

This is the second year that 5 cents on the tax rate have been set aside for a \$41 million, five-year maintenance plan. The funds have been put into a separate account that cannot be used for anything else. According to the 2012 Citizen Survey, maintenance and infrastructure needs are the top priority for city residents. Much work has already been done, including street paving and riverwalk repairs, and will continue this year.

### Highlights of this year's budget include:

- No property tax increase
- Core services maintained
- 2% pay raise for employees; additional 1.5% pool to be used for merit pay for eligible employees

### Did you know?

The amount the city spends on police and fire services alone will consume 100% of all property tax dollars the city collects this year - everything else is paid for with state funding and fees.

- Strong savings (fund balance) for emergencies of about \$25 million
- Continued funding for 5-year infrastructure improvement plan
- 5¢ of the overall 45¢ tax rate funds a five-year plan to make \$41 million worth of repairs and improvements – such as street repaving and work on public facilities such as the Riverwalk – that had been put on hold during the economic downturn
- Continued public safety investment, including funding a full year's funding for the WPD's new Mobile Field Force, as well as the purchase of a new ladder fire truck



*Firefighters with the new heavy rescue truck purchased to replace a 1999 truck.*

### By the numbers

- Total budget: \$141 million (includes General Fund, fee-based services)
- General Fund budget: \$88 million
- # of employees: 993 (More than half of all city employees in police and fire services)



More information:  
[wilmingtonnc.gov/budget](http://wilmingtonnc.gov/budget)

## Crime remains at historic lows



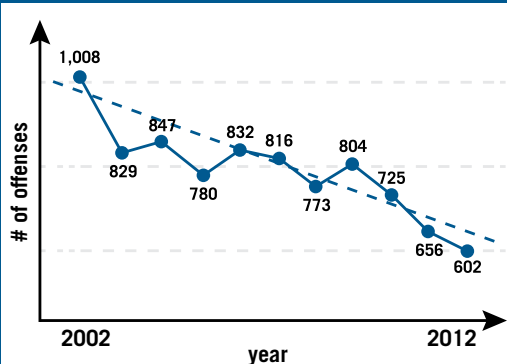
*Neighborhood children talk to MFF officer on foot patrol.*

The Wilmington Police Department has been focused on keeping crime at historic lows. Between 2002 and 2012, the number of major crimes has gone down 40.3 percent, with violent crimes in the downtown area going down 67 percent, even though Wilmington's population has grown 33 percent during this time period.

Along with proactive crime prevention efforts, geographic-based policing and other strategies, the department's new Mobile Field Force (MFF) is also now in operation. This 12-officer unit of six uniformed patrol officers and six undercover officers is able to respond quickly to crime, or fear of crime, anywhere in the city.

While the city's crime rate continued to drop last year, there is a trend of crimes such as burglaries and robberies moving from one neighborhood to another. This follows on the heels of several successful targeted crime prevention efforts by the WPD. Those efforts will continue and this new unit will complement existing efforts such as dedicated neighborhood patrol officers.

### Violent Crime Totals Citywide 2002-2012



## Citizens help plan city's future

It is estimated that 30,000 new residents will move to the Wilmington area in the next 25 years. The city is preparing for this by working on a Comprehensive Plan to guide the city's long-range plan for growth. We need your help! City Council has already appointed a 15-member citizen advisory committee to oversee development of the plan, and now the city is seeking input from other area leaders, residents, and community groups.

In May, the city held a kick-off meeting with almost 100 participants. Input was collected about what people liked and did not like about key issues such as area transportation, infrastructure, housing and economic development.



*Citizens discuss growth issues at kick-off meeting.*

Areas of highest interest included: redevelopment and maintenance of current infrastructure; more focus on education and outdoor play areas for children; and housing for seniors. More citizen input will be gathered this summer and fall.

### Transportation now and later

The same growth challenges apply to area transportation. The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) is working on a Transportation 2040 plan. You can help shape how future transportation funds are allocated by taking a survey at [transportation2040.org](http://transportation2040.org). More than 1,000 citizens have already taken the survey.



Planning for growth:  
Transportation survey:

[createwilmington.com](http://createwilmington.com)  
[transportation2040.org](http://transportation2040.org)



## Randall widening on schedule

The city's Randall Parkway widening project is on schedule and almost 50% complete. Much of the new travel lanes and bike paths have been completed, as well as stormwater drainage improvements (see picture of stormwater pipes at left). More than half of the project's \$5.6 million budget comes from federal and state monies, with most of the remaining funding coming from the 2006 voter-approved transportation bond. The project is expected to be completed in early 2014.



## Downtown riverwalk almost complete



*Riverwalk section under construction on northern end.*

The downtown riverwalk is Wilmington's #1 tourist attraction. The city is working to maintain existing sections of the riverwalk, improve adjacent areas such as Riverfront Park, and extend the riverwalk to the north. Below are several projects which are either underway right now or will get underway later this year. Much of the work that had been put on hold during the economic downturn is now funded through the city's 5-year infrastructure improvement plan.

### Muters Alley, Ann/Orange Street access repairs

Work to replace an old concrete retaining wall with a new steel bulkhead at Muters Alley will begin next month and be completed this fall. Also, in late summer or early fall, work to stabilize the retaining walls at the riverwalk access points of Orange Street Landing and the foot of Ann Street will occur.

### New riverwalk behind Brooks Building

This section of riverwalk must be demolished and replaced with a freestanding section of riverwalk that will be supported by wooden piles. This \$1.76 million will get underway later this year and take approximately 14 months to complete.

### Market Street support beams

This project, which began in April, involves replacing or repairing 58 steel support beams under the riverwalk at the foot of Market Street. The project is expected to be complete next month.

### US Coast Guard bulkhead

A portion of Riverfront Park is owned by the US Coast Guard. A section of the Coast Guard riverwalk bulkhead in front of the Federal Courthouse is in need of repair. The Coast Guard will coordinate necessary repairs with the city's planned improvements to Riverfront Park next year. When this work gets underway, it will involve the closure of the riverwalk and Water Street in front of the Federal Courthouse.

### Construction of northern Riverwalk sections

The construction of a significant stretch of riverwalk just north of the Convention Center is underway and should be complete in September. This portion will run alongside the privately-owned marina planned for this area. Once this section is complete, two final sections will get underway that will connect with the existing riverwalk, providing a continuous 1.75 mile riverwalk from Chandler's Wharf to the Isabel Holmes Bridge.

## Burnt Mill Creek water quality improved

The city and NC State University have a federal grant to make improvements to help curb polluted stormwater runoff from flowing into Burnt Mill Creek. These improvements include the recent installation of a special pavement on two city streets that allows stormwater to drain through it and rain gardens that help to:

- Reduce stormwater runoff pollution
- Reduce street flooding
- Improve aesthetics
- Improve water quality in Burnt Mill Creek

The special permeable pavement allows stormwater runoff (rainwater that flows off streets, driveways, and roofs) to soak into the ground, which naturally filters out pollutants. A permeable pavement parking area has been constructed on Church Street near the intersection of 19th Street.

Rain gardens allow polluted stormwater to be filtered by vegetation and soil. A rain garden has been installed on Ann Street near the intersection of 9th Street. In addition, permeable parking and rain gardens have also been installed on 12th Street between Dock and Orange streets.

All of these improvements are located in the Burnt Mill Creek Watershed, which has poor water quality according to the 2012 Stormwater Quality Report.



*Plants being installed at Ann Street rain garden.*



[wilmingtonnc.gov/stormwater](http://wilmingtonnc.gov/stormwater)

## Firefighter memorial in progress

The Wilmington Firefighters Memorial to be located at Empie Park Fire Station #2 is in progress and scheduled for dedication on Sept. 11, 2013. Fundraising is continuing, with about 80 percent of the \$250,000 goal complete. The center piece is being sculpted and bronzed (see picture at right) and installation is expected to begin this month.

The memorial will honor the seven Wilmington firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty since the department began in the mid 1800s, as well as the 343 NYC firefighters who perished during the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001.

The centerpiece is a steel artifact recovered from the rubble of the World Trade Center in New York City, surrounded by seven bronze statues, as well as benches and garden areas.



*Sculpture being prepared.*



[wfdfirefightersmemorial.org](http://wfdfirefightersmemorial.org)



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Wilmington, NC 28402-1810

### General Information Phone Numbers

Citizen Services Information .....341-7800  
Emergency.....911  
Police/Non-Emergency .....343-3600  
To find the police district assigned to your neighborhood,  
see [wilmingtonnc.gov/police](http://wilmingtonnc.gov/police)  
Fire/Non-Emergency.....341-7846  
Parks and Recreation .....341-7855  
Parks Hotline .....341-7852  
Street Maintenance.....341-7879  
Parking.....762-5678  
Zoning.....254-0900  
Trash pickup/Recycling.....341-7875  
Stormwater .....341-4646  
Cape Fear Public Utility Authority .....332-6550  
Code Enforcement .....341-3266

Look for the  for information

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In an effort to save money and trees, citizens  
can sign up to receive this newsletter by email  
instead of direct mail. If you are interested,  
please email the city with your name and  
regular mailing address to:

[newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov](mailto:newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov)

### City Council Meetings

City Council meetings are generally held on  
the first and third Tuesday of the month at  
6:30 p.m. at City Hall. For more information,  
see the city's web site at: [wilmingtonnc.gov](http://wilmingtonnc.gov)

### City Council Meetings on GTV8

Council meetings are broadcast live on GTV8,  
the city channel on Time Warner Cable. Council  
meetings are replayed:

- ~ Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, the week of  
the Council meeting at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.
- ~ Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, the week after  
the Council meeting at 11:30 p.m.

### This Week From City Hall

Catch a summary of city events and activities on  
GTV8's "This Week From City Hall," airing twice  
daily at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. New episodes are  
available on the 1st and 15th of each month.

### GTV8 online

All GTV8 programming can be found on the city's  
website, live or on-demand. From the front page,  
simply click on "online videos." Then, select the  
program you want to watch.



**The city on the web**  
[wilmingtonnc.gov](http://wilmingtonnc.gov)



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